

The Role of Community Colleges In An Aging Society



Conference Report

**August 14, 2003
Kapi'olani Community College
Ohi'a Auditorium
Honolulu, Hawaii**

October 2003

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Executive Summary

The Role of Community Colleges In An Aging Society¹

August 14, 2003

Given the growth of Hawaii's senior population and the concomitant need for senior services, the University of Hawaii's seven community colleges will be playing a unique and critical role to meet that need with paraprofessional workforce development, caregiver training and other opportunities.

The conference opened with dramatic dual monologues by Ben and Gloria Tamashiro, Hawaii's favorite retirees and long-time volunteers and amateur actors. Their "conversations" point to the multifarious issues of retirees from health and grandparenting to the meaning of retirement, consumer scams and parent-child conflicts among others. The point raised is, "Is Anybody Listening?"

This conference was an attempt to address this impending change by providing Hawaii's seven community colleges with input from the perspective of the Executive Office on Aging, the area agencies on aging, the Department of Labors' Workforce Development Branch, the needs of seniors as seen from AARP and the tourism industry in anticipation of the growth of senior tourists.

Each of the seven community colleges had an opportunity to provide an update on their activities in aging and senior related programs and their plans for future activities in this area. The last session involved focus group brainstorming activities that provided an opportunity for the community to suggest new initiatives that community colleges should consider engaging in to better serve the needs of tomorrow's seniors and disabled.

Plans call for the use of this document to provide a springboard and the agenda for future collaborative planning among the community college system. It is hoped that each community college will work towards creating their own community advisory group to assure responsiveness to this growing population.

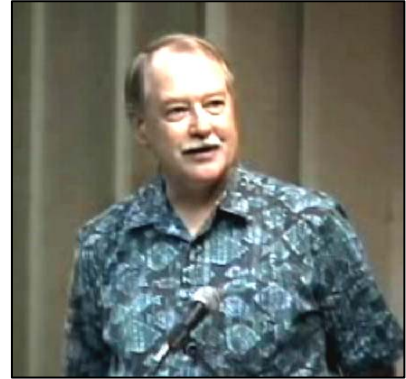
¹ This conference was financially underwritten with a grant from the State Executive Office on Aging

Welcoming Remarks

**John Morton, Ph.D., Chancellor
Kapi'olani Community College**

| It is my pleasure to welcome you to this conversation about the role of the community college in Hawaii's aging population - about *our* role in serving the aging population.

Post-secondary education has two missions: 1) to create new knowledge, and 2) to take that knowledge to individuals so that they can better perform their jobs and better live their lives. We need to know and understand what the challenges and needs are in the community if we are to transfer the right knowledge in the right way and put it into the hands of real, working people to be successful.



As we begin to understand what is needed today and in the future, you will find in the community colleges the professionals who will accept the challenge to create and transfer the right knowledge to the next generation of workers who will be dealing with issues of aging.

We are looking for different models of delivery of care, and with those different models come different training needs and higher expectations on the parts of the workers that we as educators need to understand.

Community colleges have the professionals available to train those who will be dealing with aging issues. Our educators want to be a part of the solution by continuing this dialogue and staying involved with the professional community. That is what we are looking for from you, and we give back to you our professional promise that when we, with you, know what needs to be done, we will find a way to deliver that education.

There are already some exciting things happening in that regard. Technology is having an impact on how we move information and training around the state to the population and workers who need it. The ability to cross the boundaries of the traditional health disciplines is going to continue to grow, as the community colleges have many accredited health programs for which we must forge new boundaries to respond to the community.

Keeping the aging population learning and active is one of the best ways to keep them healthy. Community colleges are about lifelong learning - we have a responsibility to ensure that educational opportunities continue to exist to improve the lives of citizens of all ages.

I wish you a good beginning of this conversation and I greatly appreciate your willingness to participate and look forward to the results and to working with you in the months and years to come.

Conference Vision

Cullen Hayashida, Ph.D.

Kapi'olani Community College Long-term Care Resource Center Initiative

Today, we are at the cusp of the age wave and the need to have an adequate workforce of paraprofessional workers will be enormous. In response to that concern, the University of Hawaii Center on Aging, and others in the community engaged in preparing a grant application to one of the federal agencies to strengthen paraprofessional training in Hawaii. We were not successful in obtaining grant funding but the process heightened our awareness of the problem and the willingness of organizations to assist in off-setting part of the cost of creating collective change. Many came out in support of that effort and today, many more are aware that much more needs to be done. That failed initiative became the springboard to today's dialogue.



The conference today brings together our community programs and agencies from our respective communities and all of our 7 community colleges. We are here to address several questions and are depending on community agencies for help to provide us with guidance to improve the effectiveness of the community college system in Hawaii. These are issues that we hope to address:

- Identification of the trends impacting senior needs and services
- Determination of what the community say it needs in order to address Hawaii's future long-term care needs
- Identification of the major workforce development issues related to the aging workforce, the aging consumer, and to the growth of senior care in Hawaii
- Clarification regarding what community colleges are doing now
- Development of Recommendations regarding what else can be done
- Commitment to maintain this dialogue

I want to thank everyone for attending and to the State Executive Office on Aging for their generous funding to make this meeting possible. As Dr. Morton had pointed out, you are our eyes and ears in the community and the dialogue process will help us move forward in a pro-active way.

Is Anybody Listening?²

Dramatic Dual Monologue on the Aging Experience

**Ben and Gloria Tamashiro
Hawaii's Most Favorite Retired Couple**

Ben and Gloria share their trials and tribulations on the issues of aging. During this 15 minute dramatic dual dialogue, the couple muses independently and weaves a story of parent-child conflicts, the joys of grandparenting, retirement, consumer scams, the dwindling of old friends, Viagra, the fears of health problems and their attendant cost and the loss of independence when one is no longer allowed to drive a car. Today, Gloria is learning to use the computer for word processing and emailing. She is also frustrated with the loss of the human touch when so much is automated. Death is always an impending concern. At the same time, this couple is aware of that their children and grandchildren are their legacy.



These expressions reflected the complexity of our seniors and retirees and their complex concerns. If community colleges are to create a positive social change, it will require listening to those whom it wishes to serve. Are we listening? Is anybody listening? Or as one scholar pointed out once, is gerontology merely the study of old people by young people?

² The fictional script was prepared by Bruce Mondschain of Chicago, Illinois and was used with his permission.

What Does the Community Need? The Aging Networks' Perspective

Karen Miyake, County Executive
City and County of Honolulu's Elderly Affairs Division

What do seniors want and need?

Seniors want and need all those things that the Older Americans Act says they are entitled to: adequate income, good health, suitable housing, opportunity to be employed and have meaningful activity, retirement with dignity, independence in managing their own lives, efficient community services, and institutional and home and community based care.



How do these needs relate to the role of the community college?

The community colleges can provide help in several ways:

- Offer classes for paraprofessionals and front-line workers, provide on-site training, and have specific offerings such as communicating with people with dementia and managing difficult behavior.
- Continue developing coursework in non-profit management.
- Provide technical assistance to service providers and help with students placed there.
- Encourage students to do more volunteer service in the community.
- Encourage more of the younger generation to major in gerontology.
- Incorporate aging issues into the generalized curriculum and in community training programs: (1) to sensitize students to aging issues, (2) to make positive changes on how seniors are perceived, (3) to help people understand that all of us in the community are caregivers, and that we don't have to be alone in the hard tasks that need to be done, (4) to help students understand that we all have personal and social responsibility in an aging society.
- Collaborate with aging programs to identify and fill area specific needs.
- Offer courses for well seniors to help them remain independent: (1) courses that help retirees maintain their health and financial well-being, (2) courses that promote good health habits and disease prevention, (3) Specific topics suggested include: driving training, legal issues, how to be assertive in working with health care professionals, living with chronic illness, weight and strength training, Medicare and Medicaid, navigating the social service system to get needed services, medication management, self care and (4) consider a caregiver channel for public TV.
- Consider how community colleges can channel the great numbers of baby boomers who will be retiring and their need to make greater contributions to society. We are at a turning point where retirement is being transformed from a time of active leisure to a time to make greater contributions to society. The problem is that we do not have a wide range of opportunities for these baby boomers who are looking for ways to fulfill their deferred dreams. Community college is the perfect place to develop these opportunities, and at the same time meet our needs for more caregivers for dependent elders.

What Does the Community Need? Our Active Seniors' Perspective

**Greg Marchildon, Executive Director
AARP - Hawaii**

There is a huge role for Hawaii's community colleges to play in our aging society. Hawaii needs a vision for long-term care and all of the things that come under that umbrella. We have had very substantive discussion on this issue and now is the time to start collaborating and make things happen.



People are living longer and we need to be ready to cope in our hospitals, care homes, and schools. We need leadership from Governor Lingle, from the state house, community and membership groups, and business and academic groups.

Mental and physical activities increase the quality of life. Community colleges can bring people together in smaller and larger communities, and more simply, provide an environment that encourages intellectual pursuit and keeps minds sharp.

The fastest growing section of Hawaii's population is people 82 years and older. We have a very large per capita of baby boomers moving through mid-life and into retirement. There are about 800,000 physicians in the United States, less than 2,000 of which specialize in geriatrics - physicians who are trained to deal with caring for aging people. Geriatrics should be the specialty of the future, and we should support and encourage it.

There is tremendous opportunity for aging as the next great area of business and economic development when it is explored the right way. CBS is now the number one network in the country, partly because they had a vision around a business strategy to attract the exploding aging population.

The aging population is interested in re-careering and educational pursuits for their own interests. They are prepared to write the check because they are interested in taking the classes. Community colleges can provide and aggressively market opportunities to this exploding population.

Technology is a huge area - boomers are very computer literate, and their parents are experiencing "Internet empowerment" with home PCs. Community colleges can offer courses and technical training for the basic tools and knowledge to exploit what technology can provide. We need to figure out what people want to do and how we can bring them together to do those things in a vibrant, fun and exciting environment. We want to provide educational enrichment opportunities for the aging population to share their knowledge, experience and opinions.

What Does the Community Need? Hawaii Tourism Industry's Perspective

**Prof. Pauline Sheldon, Former Acting Dean
School of Travel Industry Management, University of Hawaii**

Opportunities for Hawaii with the Senior Traveler

Seniors travel for physical and mental activity with groups and tours, and with their whole families. They go on vacations with a purpose for more meaningful experiences - to challenge the mind, for a spiritual experience, to do volunteering, and for the rogue scholar experience.

When they travel, seniors want to experience cultures first hand. Hawaii has a lot to offer in this area. They want expert tour guides, plenty of time to fully explore a site, and a worry-free experience. They also want to meet and socialize with fellow travelers.



Telephones are seniors' main life-line, although thousands of websites offer senior travel deals and information. How-to courses on using the Internet and handheld products for travel information retrieval would enable seniors to take advantage of those deals.

Hawaii needs to consider the senior travelers' needs:

- Physical - larger signs, maps and menus for poorer eyesight, amplified phones for poorer hearing;
- Psychological - health and wellness mixed with the cultural-spiritual experience
- Need to contribute to and experience authentic local culture.
- Ensure logistical smoothness and reduce crowding

Community colleges can work to expand and deepen their hospitality programs so that industry personnel become more knowledgeable of and sensitive to elder needs. We need to understand behavior and spending patterns to develop new opportunities for both Hawaii and senior travelers:

- Volunteer or service learning opportunities would fulfill seniors' desires to be involved in the culture.
- Train students in Hawaii's health and wellness culture.
- Train suppliers - hotels, airlines and attractions - on how to accommodate the aging traveler.

Travel is about making memories and fulfilling dreams - "You don't grow old until your memories are bigger than your dreams." Hawaii is the number one travel destination, and our travel industry is working to keep those dreams alive.

What Does the Community Need? A Workforce Development Perspective

Elaine Young
State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

Hawaii is reaching retirement age, but as needs change and the cost of living rises, seniors are working beyond their projected retirement age. Retirees are volunteering when they have steady income but they want to keep busy; however, problems arise with transportation, communication and health issues.

The elderly are viewed as a valuable working resource, and the workforce has responded to retirees by offering flexible hours, modified job descriptions, and more training.



In addressing the needs of the aging workforce, we need to:

- Continue to strengthen partnerships with the community colleges;
- Offer basic computer skills training for service jobs (especially in the health industry); and
- Reach out and provide services and non-credit courses to disadvantaged, immigrant, non-English-speakers.

The Department of Labor and Industrial Relations wants to continue to strengthen its working relationship with the community colleges. The community colleges have been very responsive to the Departments requests and the needs of employers by offering training in computer and customer service skills and non-credit classes at convenient times. We will need to get continual feedback from seniors to further develop these ideals and to make improvements toward more environmentally and ergonomically senior-friendly campuses.

What Does the Community Need?

Overview of Aging in Hawaii

Pat Sasaki, Director
State Executive Office on Aging

What is Aging in Hawaii?

If our parents and grandparents were conservative and saved their money, ours is the generation that is spending that money. It is the dream of immortality of humans and the earth we occupy. We are spending billions of dollars to defy gravity and to prevent aging. We are spending billions of dollars for the look of Vogue rather than eat and exercise to be vogue. Think about how you spend your dollars. Are you buying a product because you really need it or because someone has convinced you that aging is not a good thing, and you must prevent it?



Whatever happened to accepting one's aging as a natural phase rather than a process to dread? There was a time when aging was exalted and cherished in society. Elder care was not an issue because caring for one's family member was a normal routine of living. In many of Hawaii's families, elder care is still that. They don't call it elder care – they call it love. Families and professionals are seeking to understand the basics, the physiology and psychology of aging – the aging process, dementia, and injury prevention.

As of 2003, no one has cured death nor figured out how to prevent water, wind and heat from eroding rock and soil. I would suggest, however, my cure for aging. It is the 3Rs – Recognition, Respect and Responsibility. When we can incorporate these values in our every day lives, our work and our roles in the community, we will then assure a society well prepared for aging. May life be long, healthy and full of love.

From infancy throughout adulthood, mastery of the 3Rs defines our individuality, our humanity and our relationship with the spaces we occupy. As community colleges you have long embraced the values of Recognition, Respect and Responsibility. Continue to educate the community on human development, communication, and aging issues such as Alzheimer's: detecting it and getting help.

The community colleges might well be a type of senior center – a gathering place for lifelong learning that is safe and welcoming to older adults; a place to learn about and explore the sociology, physiology and psychology of aging. We need to acknowledge that the majority of our aging society is independent, on the move, articulate and more capable than they get credit for.

Community Colleges' Update: Aging and Disabilities-Related Activities and Initiatives

Hawaii Community College

Representative: Trina Nahm-Mijo, RN, Nursing Department

- The Nurse's Aide course is offered each semester as a non-credit course.
- Hawaiian Cultural program developed a Kupuna Program for seniors age 50-80 to work with troubled youth. Lasted 2 years.
- The Adult Residential Care Home Operator course sequence is offered by the Division of Nursing and Allied Health each semester.
- R.N. and L.P.N. courses are offered with care of the aged integrated throughout the curricula of both programs.
- Worked with their County Office on Aging to have a series of classes for paraprofessionals in Hilo and Honokaa on various aspects of the aging process beyond specific skills per se.
- Learning communities are planning ideas on how to address community needs. They want to integrate intergenerational programs to help keep family values in tact.

Honolulu Community College

Representative: Sharon Ota, Dean

- Certificate in Human Services is being offered.
- Practicums and internships have been critical aspects of the program to help students apply what they learn in class. The program prepares them as paraprofessionals and for entry into the School of Social Work at UH or HPU.
- A computer lab is available to seniors, which is taught by volunteer seniors.

Kapi'olani Community College

Representative: Michael Tagawa, Dean

- Because of declines in state funding, the curriculum has been expanded to the point where half of the health program are noncredit courses.
- Education and other services are being delivered in person or online to the communities where training is needed.
- Because the campus is faced with dwindling resources, Kapi'olani Community College must collaborate with the industry and community to provide needed training.
- Kapi'olani Community College is engaging in job profiling to better define what skills are needed to provide appropriate training for care home operators as a start. This will also help to develop the curriculum further.

Kauai Community College

Representative: William Blackburn, Continuing Education & Training

- Will continue offering Caregiver courses because of the high demand for them.
- Planning on a home management course.
- Offers computer courses for seniors.
- Help people start businesses as home health care operators.

Leeward Community College

Representative: Randall Francisco, Office of Community Education & Training

- Kapolei now has a day care for seniors and children.
- Courses for seniors are being offered.

Maui Community College

Representative: Nancy Johnson, RN, Nursing Department Chair

- There has been a big emphasis on change on paraprofessionals. Each semester, about 70 nurse's aide students take a class that is held over cable television.
- A course on elder care has been recently added. It caters to those who did not pass the English test and starts off at a 6th grade entry level. The average age of the participants is 50 years old.
- MCC has done a demonstration of the value of Tele-home care which connects health care providers with patients at home. We believe that this reduces the cost home visits all the time by professionals. Twenty-two states get reimbursed for tele-home care, but not Hawaii.

Windward Community College

Representative: Gerri Kabei, Continuing Education and Training Coordinator

- WCC's Continuing Education and Training Center has transitioned from focusing on family needs to elder needs.
- Group of middle-aged women started AGE (Age Awareness and Growth Education). Through education, seniors are active participants in the process and take advantage of opportunities.
- Educational fieldtrips, health, leisure, computer courses are offered.
- A Caregiver Workshop has also been offered. WCC is contemplating creating a video on caregiver training.

Elder-Friendly Community College Focus Group Recommendations

Conference participants were divided into focus groups to discuss six issues: 1) Caregiver Training; 2) Funding & Service Learning; 3) Marketing; 4) Senior Friendly and Senior-Market Tourism; 5) Lifelong Learning and Senior College; and 6) Teacher Education, Faculty Development, and Curriculum. The following were the suggestions directed at University of Hawaii's Community Colleges to address the elderly from the brainstorming that occurred.

Caregiver Training

- 1) Older adults are not valued in society.
 - Younger students need to be sensitive to and appreciate elders. This can be achieved through intergenerational activities. Lessons in the classroom should help students relate concepts to their lives so that there is a realization that they, family members, and friends will become older.
 - Professionals should also receive sensitivity training to make them understand how it is to be an older adult.
 - Pop culture's portrayal of older adults should be more positive. Older adults should be cast in roles that do not taint the view of aging.
 - People should be assessed whether or not they are suited for the caregiving field.
- 2) The field does not have much economic attraction.
 - Nurse's aide is an entry-level job, but the training and pay scale are at the lowest level. Can paraprofessional level training curriculum be articulated with higher-level professional jobs?
 - People in elder care may not be passionate workers. A values assessment should be incorporated in the hiring and training process. Can job profiling of professional and paraprofessional jobs help?
- 3) More varied types of family caregiver training needed.
 - St. Francis Hospital has a caregiver training class that is offered periodically. Community Colleges should look into offering the class also.
 - Short videos should be developed to instruct caregivers.
 - Telehealth Technology permits cameras to be used at home to emit images of nurse/doctor.
 - Services such as transportation and classes should be consolidated to help caregivers attend classes.

Funding & Service Learning

- 1) Suggestions for funding opportunities include:
 - Department of Human Services
 - Grant-writing team

- Long-Term Care Resource Center at the University of Hawaii at Manoa
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grants
- DHHS/HRSA Telehealth
- Medicare/Medicaid or other health insurance coverage
- Center for Disease Control

2) Service Learning

- Require 20-30 hours
- Students should develop relationship with faculty members

Marketing

1) Bring programs to the seniors in the community.

- Provide courses using various types of media (CDs, DVDs, Video Conferencing).

2) Market to seniors with language barriers or to those who are computer illiterate.

- Seniors should not be excluded just because they have not been in school for years.
- Seniors need to take responsibility to join associations and other groups.
- A resource list should be produced for seniors

3) Conduct market research; Seniors should influence the services they want.

- Ask them what services they want and how they should be delivered.

Senior Friendly and Senior-market Tourism

1) Market to local seniors

- Provide computer/internet skills to help them visit websites with travel-related links

2) Ascertain the accessibility of tours for the disabled

- Airports, taxis, etc. need to develop a protocol on how to handle people in wheelchairs or with disability needs

3) Offer a class on travel for seniors and those requiring transportation

- Require training for all state DOT personnel
- Use tourists as volunteers to teach classes

4) Ask the seniors what activities they would like to do during their trips

- Use volunteers to teach exercise, computer skills, arts and crafts
- Provide competitive activities such as a senior marathon

5) Plan trips with specific details.

- Code tickets like handicap placards so that seniors can be given proper assistance

6) Tourist businesses should be more senior-friendly.

- Consideration should be given to those who walk slowly, hear poorly, etc.

- 7) Train tour guides to give accurate information.
 - They should specify which places are not safe to visit.
- 8) Affiliate with the Elder Hostel Program
 - Compete with other private sector higher institutions for the senior tourist market

Lifelong Learning and Senior College

- 1) Choices for topics:
 - Cultural sensitivity and awareness/enrichment
 - Reminiscence/oral history
 - Revival of old art forms (crochet, knitting, quilting)
 - Volunteerism (understanding and defining the role of a volunteer, volunteer management)
 - Seniors as instructors/facilitators
- 2) Providing a senior-friendly environment:
 - Shorter classes/workshops/seminars
 - Early morning courses
 - Course material offered on CD/DVD/VHS
 - Complementary nutrition
 - Large print maps, signage
 - Friendly registration
 - Hospitable ambassadors, customer service
 - Comfortable seats, benches
 - Ample parking
 - Evaluate the physical campus to determine “elder friendliness” using a committee of senior volunteers
 - Coordinated Senior Health and Wellness Programs in conjunction with Saturday “Peoples’ Open Market” at Community Colleges

Teacher Education and Faculty Development

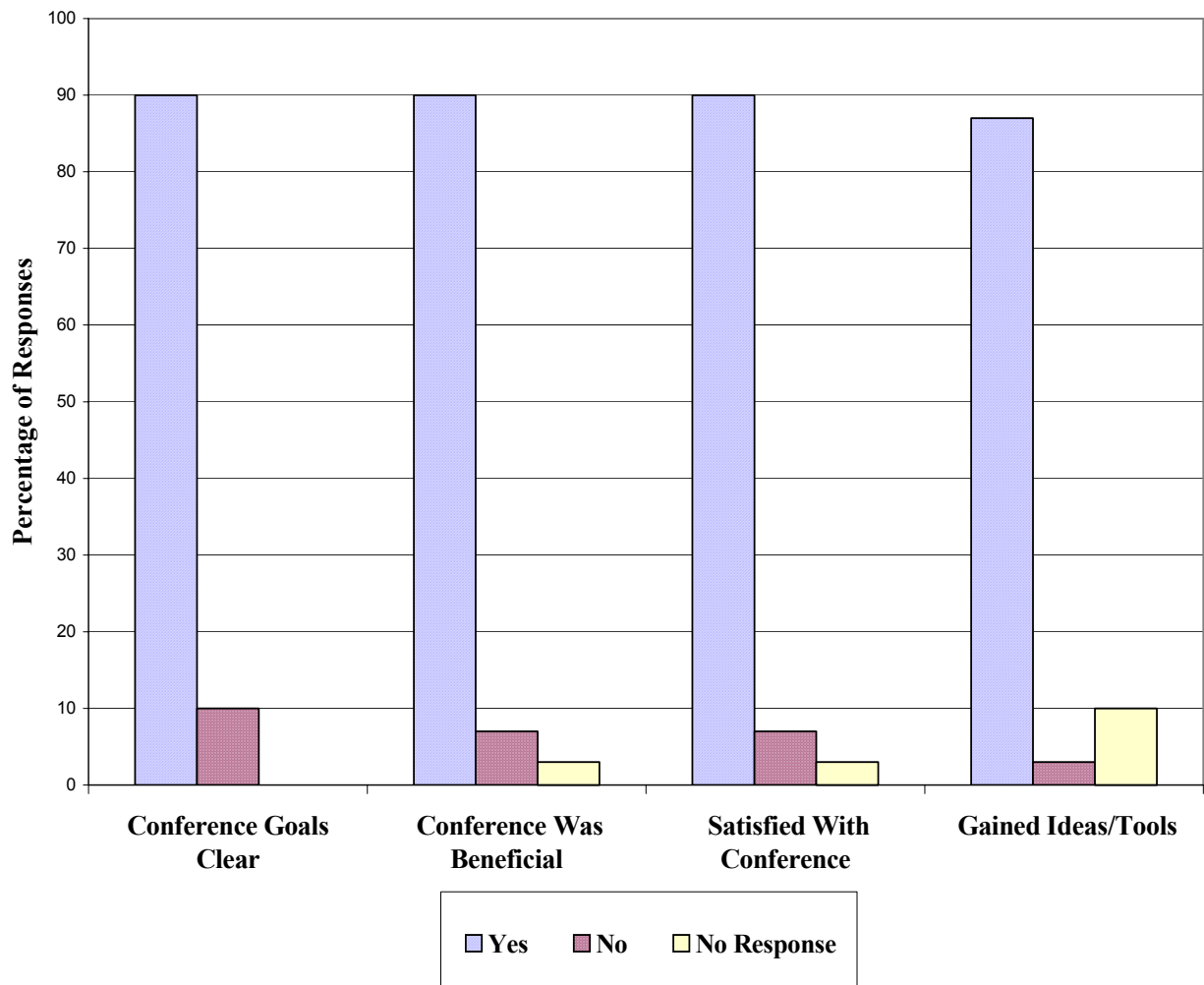
- 1) Content development
 - Recruitment of majors
 - Teacher training
 - Method of sharing a framework of needs and effective responses
- 2) Industry
 - What does the public worker know?
 - What are the basic requirements?
 - What are the needs and expectations?
 - Educate employers on the cost and standards of training
 - Standardize hiring
 - Provide service of quality and class

Appendix I Evaluation Report

Evaluation

- The conference brought together approximately 85 attendees from the University of Hawaii community colleges, community-base elderly services programs, and health care industry professionals from all islands.
- Twenty-nine participants (34 %) returned the evaluation form. Their feedback indicated a highly positive appraisal of the conference.

Conference Evaluation



Highlights of the Conference:

1. Speakers
2. Focus group discussions
3. Networking
4. Variety of topics covered
5. Generation of new ideas
6. Dialogue facilitation
7. Learning about the role of Community Colleges

Conference Characteristics Least Liked:

1. Timing; too lengthy
2. Not having enough time for focus group discussions and networking
3. Not enough participation from audience during presentations
4. Sound quality in certain meeting areas
5. Insufficient signage

Suggestions For Improving The Conference:

1. More participation during presentations by guest speakers
2. Better publicity
3. Larger printing, better signage
4. Distribution of pre-conference information
5. Multi-media for presentations
6. More diverse audience

Suggested Topics For Future Conferences:

1. Community colleges' proposed plans for action and implementation
2. Community colleges' progress in implementing specific ideas
3. Curriculum to meet the needs of the community
4. Collaboration on funding for senior programs and other needs
5. Continuous training for caregivers
6. Methods of generating interest among the younger sector of the population to pursue careers in gerontology/geriatrics

